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ABSTRACT

Intended for those who teach dyadic communication, this paper argues that each partner in an intimate relationship has two primary communication needs: (1) to listen, look at, and pay attention to the "self" in order to attain clear awareness as a source of information for self-disclosure; and (2) to listen, look at, and pay attention to the "other" and to respond with accurate empathic statements and nonverbal behaviors that communicate nonjudgmental understanding. Following a review of the literature, the paper presents an interactional model of intimate communication in which each partner alternates between being self-aware and other-aware and in which the interactional process consists of mutual self-disclosure and empathic responding. The paper concludes with a call for intensive training in self-awareness/self-disclosure and empathy in any program of instruction for intimate communication. (FL)

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Effective Listening: Key to Intimate Communication

by Jack Seiquist

I want to describe "where I'm coming from" as I write this paper. I teach philosophy and one-to-one communication; and I counsel individuals, couples, and groups at West Valley College, a community college in Saratoga, California. My intended audience is people who teach dyadic communication--whether their discipline is speech communication, counseling, psychology, or social work.[1]

I'd like to acknowledge a long-standing prejudice--the world needs more listeners! People who listen both to themselves and to others. Now, I come by this bias honestly. By nature and by temperament I am somewhat introspective and more inclined to listen than to talk. In addition, I have been trained to be a "professional listener" in two different but related capacities: as a counselor (I've been strongly influenced by Carl Rogers) and as a priest. I studied, taught, and counseled in the Jesuit Order for twenty years. I didn't like the life style, so I left the Jesuits in 1970 and began work at West Valley College.

To be more specific about my bias, I think that each partner in an intimate relationship has two primary communication needs: (1) to listen, look at, and pay attention to the self in order to attain clear self-awareness as a source of information for self-disclosure; and (2) to listen, look at, and pay attention to the other--and to respond with empathy (the attitude) and with accurate, empathic statements and nonverbal responses (the skill) in order to communicate nonjudgmental understanding.[2] A portion of this paper is an attempt to show that my bias is supported not only by

my teaching and counseling experience but also by communication theory, current research, and communication training programs.[1]

I want to do three things in this paper: (1) state--and support--my conviction that, when partners are committed to dialog, the key to communication in intimate, long-term relationships is effective listening; (2) present an Interactional Model of Intimate Communication; and (3) emphasize the importance of including thorough study of the concept of dialog and intensive training in self-awareness/self-disclosure and empathy in any program of instruction for intimate communication.

Listening is a process of becoming aware: aware of oneself through introspection; aware of others through empathy.[4] Listening is effective when it gets results; namely, self-awareness and other-awareness. In the view being presented, listening is the means for partners to achieve awareness; and the exchange of awareness is the essence of dyadic communication. Self-awareness leads to self-disclosure; and other-awareness results in empathic responding.[5]

Effective Listening in an Atmosphere of Dialog

Dialog is the context in which effective listening is the key to intimate communication. Richard L. Johannesen has noted that there is substantial agreement among scholars that the phenomenon of dialog is characterized by several essential components: (1) genuineness; (2) accurate empathic understanding; (3) unconditional positive regard; (4) presentness; (5) spirit of mutual equality; (6) supportive psychological climate.[6]

Let us assume that partners are striving to create and maintain an interpersonal climate characterized by the above attitudinal components of dialog. If their attitude is dialogic, then it can be hypothesized that

the skill of effective listening is the key to intimate communication. Effective listening requires three interrelated behaviors:

1. Listening to oneself and talking from self-awareness.[7]
2. Expressing oneself clearly.
3. Empathic listening and responding to one's partner.

Listening to oneself leads to self-awareness and self-disclosure. Expressing oneself clearly means knowing what one wants to say and then getting the message across. Listening to one's partner involves making accurate, empathic responses to the partner's verbal and nonverbal communication. These three skills entail a number of specific behaviors.

Listening to oneself involves looking inward and attending to oneself ("homebase") with respect and caring; becoming aware of one's inner experience ("homebase") and "owning" it--accepting it--as one's own personal experience (no one else's); taking responsibility for this experience; attempting to suspend judgment and simply understand and accept this experience; deciding what one wants to share with the partner through open, authentic, and selective self-revelation/self-disclosure; and, when talking from self-awareness, hearing how one is communicating.

Expressing oneself clearly means knowing and being clear within oneself about what one is experiencing and what one wants to say and then getting the ideas and feelings across to the partner. One communicates meanings in such a way that the partner "gets" or understands the message. This clear and effective communication also entails such aspects of message delivery as projecting one's voice; enunciating distinctly; speaking concisely; tone of voice; eye contact; physical contact; gestures; and balance in give-and-take interaction.

Empathic listening to one's partner involves looking outward and attending to the other person with respect and caring; becoming aware of

the partner's verbal and nonverbal communication of feelings and point of view; attempting to suspend judgment and simply understand and accept the meaning of the partner's experience to him or her; deciding how one wants to respond; and then communicating one's response as accurately and empathically as one is able--with openness to revising one's understanding in terms of feedback from the partner.[8]

Assuming a context of dialog, the following hypothesis can be formulated:

> If each partner strives to be an effective listener; that is, (1) a self-aware and self-disclosing person--one who listens inwardly and then sends clear and authentic messages; and (2) an other-aware person--one who listens to the partner, receives messages and meanings, and responds empathically; then the conditions will be optimal for effective and satisfying intimate communication.

Support for the elements of this hypothesis can be derived from the literature of philosophy, psychology, and communication.

Review of the Literature

Self-awareness is a new term for an old concept. In the fifth century B.C., philosophers stressed the importance of self-knowledge--as illustrated by two familiar sayings attributed to Socrates: (1) "Know yourself;" and (2) "The unexamined life is not worth living."

John O. Stevens, as appropriate for a Gestalt psychologist, focuses on awareness as the source of communication. He says:

> Communication is very simple in terms of awareness. I have to be aware of my own experience, and be able and willing to make you aware of this experience: I have to send clear messages about my awareness--my experiences, my feelings, my needs, etc. I also have to be aware of the messages that you send: I have to be open to receive your expression of your awareness.[9]

Stevens sees honesty--authentic communication--as the potential base for building a trusting and loving relationship. Trust and love are feeling

responses toward another person, and these responses cannot be manufactured. One cannot decide to trust or love, but one can choose to communicate authentically. Stevens says:

> And when I choose to be really honest and say what I experience and what I feel, I am showing that I can be trusted. In order to do this I have to first be honest with myself and get in touch with my experiencing, and take responsibility for it by expressing it as my experiencing. This is the only kind of behavior that can bring about a response of trust.[10]

Stevens goes on to say that honesty does not necessarily evoke a response of love but that it is essential to it. He notes that:

> When I am honestly myself, and you respond warmly and with caring, then love exists. If I calculate and put on phony behavior in order to please you, you may love my behavior, but you cannot love me, because I have hidden my real existence behind this artificial behavior. Even when you love in response to my phony behavior, I cannot really receive your love. It is poisoned by my knowledge that the love is for the image I have created, not for me. I also have to be continually on guard to be sure that I maintain my image so that your love does not disappear. Since I have shut myself off from your love in this way, I will feel more lonely and unloved, and try even more desperately to manipulate myself and you in order to get this love.

Honest relating is "not always joyful or pleasant--it is sometimes sad, sometimes angry, etc,--but it is always solid and real and vitally alive."[11]

A Rogerian Perspective on Intimate Communication. Carl R. Rogers is one of America's most distinguished psychologists. He is perhaps best known for his "client-centered" approach to therapy and his "person-centered" approach to human growth and learning. Through three decades of writing based on research, teaching, and clinical experience with individuals and groups, Rogers has consistently pointed out the facilitative function of three fundamental interpersonal attitudes: genuineness, empathy, and unconditional positive regard. (In recent writings, Rogers uses the concept of caring and/or respect as synonyms for unconditional positive regard.)[12] When these three attitudes, or conditions, are present, the

communication tends to be growth-promoting in a variety of relationships: (1) therapist and client; (2) teacher and student; (3) parents and children; (4) encounter group leader and members of the group; (5) partners in close relationships.[13]

The principal obstacle to effective communication, according to Rogers, is the human tendency to evaluate the statements of others. Writing in 1951, Rogers proposed the hypothesis that:

> ...the major barrier to mutual interpersonal communication is our very natural tendency to judge, to evaluate, to approve or disapprove, the statement of the other person, or the other group.[14]

In 1956, Rogers stated:

> Our first reaction to most of the statements which we hear from other people is an immediate evaluation, or judgment, rather than an understanding of it....Very rarely do we permit ourselves to understand precisely what the meaning of his statement is to him.[15]

After giving an example of a person's negative, accusing "You" message to a partner, Rogers said that "such accusations, judgments, evaluations possibly do more to harm partnerships than any other one factor I know."[16]

To offset the tendency to react to others' behavior with evaluative statements, Rogers recommends open self-disclosure: simply communicating one's "persisting feelings" in a nonjudgmental, non-accusing way.[17] In addition, the quality of empathy is critically important in avoiding the barriers created by judgmental responses and in facilitating interpersonal communication. Rogers says:

> Real communication occurs, and this evaluative tendency is avoided, when we listen with understanding. What does this mean? It means to see the expressed idea and attitude from the other person's point of view, to sense how it feels to him, to achieve his frame of reference in regard to the thing he is talking about.[18]

Rogers points out the great difficulty of achieving and maintaining an empathic point of view.[19] He says that "in spite of all that has been

said and written on this topic, it is a way of being which is rarely seen in full bloom in a relationship."[20]

Rogers indicates the benefits of listening when he cites two significant learnings from his own life: (1) "I find I am more effective when I can listen acceptantly to myself, and can be myself;"[21] and (2) "I have found it of enormous value when I can permit myself to understand another person."[22] Rogers observes that accurately and sensitively understanding another person is mutually rewarding. He emphasizes that feeling understood is a deeply satisfying human experience and can be accompanied by relief, gratitude, and even joy.[23]

After studying several pairs of people living in partnership, Rogers concluded that communication can be a source of enrichment when a partner's attitude in the relationship corresponds to the following description:

> I will risk myself by endeavoring to communicate any persisting feeling, positive or negative, to my partner--to the full depth that I understand it in myself--as a living, present part of me. Then I will risk further by trying to understand, with all the empathy I can bring to bear, his or her response, whether it is accusatory and critical or sharing and self-revealing.[24]

Rogers asserts that, when partners achieve a "person-centered" relationship, one effect is that "communication becomes more open, more real, with more mutual listening."[25]

In his essay on "A Humanistic Conception of Man," Rogers observes that man is "first of all, incurably social." He says:

> It is my experience that man has a fundamental craving for secure, close, communicative relationships with others and feels very much cut off, alone and unfulfilled when such relationships do not exist.[26]

Rogers believes that this hunger can be best satisfied through the experience that Martin Buber describes as the "I-Thou" relationship, a deep and mutual

meeting of persons. Such experiences, says Rogers, are necessary for a person to become truly human.[27]

Current Programs in Intimate Communication. A number of programs in intimate communication are currently offered in the United States. Perhaps the majority of these can be found in the private sector rather than in public education; e.g., Marriage Encounter, Marriage Enrichment, Parent Effectiveness Training, and Mormon Family Home Evenings. In general, these programs share a common emphasis on the skills of self-disclosure, open expression of feelings, and empathic communication. In a recent study, I identified twenty-three instances of courses and programs that were developed to meet the need for communication training for close relationships. Six of these were designed for school settings.[28]

Research Findings. In general, research findings indicate that experimental groups, as a result of training in such basic skills as self-disclosure and empathic communication, show significant increases in comparison with control groups. In my recent inquiry, I found five studies which indicated that, as a consequence of treatment, significant increases in interpersonal skills were achieved. Four studies reported improved communication skills after treatment.[29] Thus, research provides solid evidence that key communication skills can be taught/learned through appropriate instruction and training.

An Interactional Model of Intimate Communication

The literature supported the importance of empathy and self-disclosure and provided a basis for an interactional model of intimate communication. Assuming that partners are mutually committed to fostering dialogic communication, the interactional model can be depicted graphically by Figure 1. (See insert.) Each partner alternates between being self-

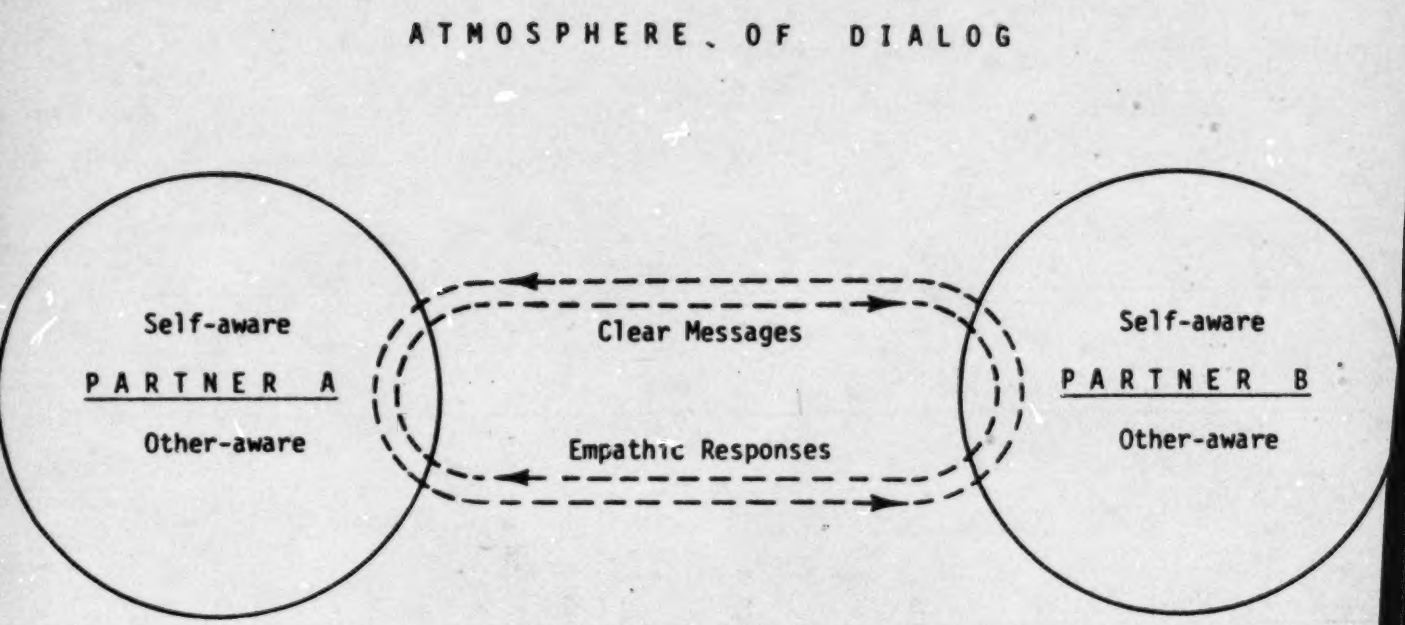

Figure 1. The Seiquist Interactional Model of Intimate Communication

aware and other-aware. The partners are linked by a two-way communication loop. The arrows indicate the direction of the communication flow. On the level of self-awareness, partners send clear messages. On the level of other-awareness, partners make empathic responses. The interactional process consists of mutual self-disclosure and empathic responding.

To illustrate how the model works, let's say that Partner A initiates communication. A listens to himself, becomes self-aware, and, talking from his self-awareness, sends as clear a message as possible (verbal and nonverbal) to B. Partner B, in turn, listens, becomes other-aware, and makes an empathic response. If A listens to B's response, feels accurately understood, and clearly says so to B, then that transaction is complete. If A does not feel understood, he can restate his message--and B can respond--until both A and B feel a sense of closure. At that point, B, through listening to herself, may become aware of a wish to initiate a clear message, and A responds empathically until both are satisfied that A understands the message. If, at that point in the process, both partners are content, there may or may not be a need for further communication. If, however, the mutual understanding results in a conflict or disagreement between A and B, then the partners need to continue the interactional process of listening, sharing, exploring alternatives, and working toward resolution.

In the interactional model, there is a third dimension of awareness. In addition to self-awareness and other awareness, partners develop an awareness of their relationship. That relationship, is, so to speak, a mysterious and precious entity with a life of its own. The relationship is valued, prized, and cultivated; and it is nourished by the process of dyadic communication.[30]

Challenge to Educators

Given the rapid rate of human turnover, Alvin Toffler says that

"education must help people to accept the absence of deep friendships, to accept loneliness and mistrust--or it must find new ways to accelerate friendship formation." By whatever means, "education will have to teach us to relate."[31]

K. Patricia Cross states her intention to make a contribution to "the greatly undernourished realm of educating for interpersonal effectiveness." She says that "our ability to deal with human problems is our primary problem as a society."[32] To respond to this problem, she sees the need to educate a cadre of experts in human services by means of a "curriculum for excellence in human relations." In addition, and almost as important, there is a parallel need for a "curriculum for adequacy in interpersonal skills." Her perception is that "people are telling us in all kinds of ways that they feel inadequate in their personal lives to relate appropriately to co-workers, family, and friends."[33]

Speaking to college officials about the sexual patterns of college students, Eleanor Macklin notes several attitudinal and behavioral changes and stresses both the need for communication skills and the importance of the underlying relationships between persons. Students need not only explicit modeling but also practice in interpersonal skills. Macklin is especially concerned that students learn:

> ...all those basic interpersonal skills so central to a capacity for mature intimacy...like how to listen to and understand another's feelings; how to get in touch with one's own feelings and share them with someone else; and how to deal with the conflicts that are bound to occur in any relationship.[34]

The need is significant. The challenge is clear. Educators can respond by providing both instruction in dialog and training in effective listening (self-awareness/self-disclosure and empathic communication), so that students can achieve more skillful and satisfying communication in their intimate, long-term relationships.[35]

NOTES

[1]I have the good fortune to be married to my best friend. I believe that Jo-Ann and I, each in our own way, are continually striving to deepen our relationship through improved communication--although of late I have been gently chided that I am so busy writing about dialog that I haven't had much time for engaging in dialog!

[2]As I am using the term, the concept of "partner" can apply to a variety of close relationships: teacher-student; counselor-counselee; friend-friend; or spouse-spouse.

[3]During the last five years (1974-1979) I've been developing a course called Achieving Dialog, which I designed together with a speech instructor friend, Tim Hegstrom. We team-taught one semester and began to inductively build a list of communication skills needed by individuals in one-to-one settings. The list grew to thirty-six separate skills (e.g., sending "I" messages; giving feedback; saying no; inviting response). Several semesters later, I used the nominal group process with my adult students to determine which were to them the most important and comprehensive skills. In the final analysis, the list was "boiled down" to three skills. In my teaching, for the sake of simplicity and emphasis, I reduce the three skills to the single broad concept of effective listening. I recognize that this is an oversimplification, yet I believe the concept of effective listening gives a clarity and focus to the learning process. Thus, the performance goal of Dialog students is essentially to become effective listeners capable of dialogic communication.

[4]Introspection, as used here, is the mental process of tuning in, paying attention to, and becoming consciously aware of one's organismic experiences. Empathy can be defined as:

"...our ability to accurately understand another individual. It is the skill of putting ourselves in the "other person's shoes" and accurately identifying his or her feelings, beliefs, attitudes, and the like" (Alton Barbour and Alvin A. Goldberg, Interpersonal Communication: Teaching Strategies and Resources (Urbana, Ill.: ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, 1974), p. 28).

Barbour and Goldberg point out that "empathy is not easy to achieve" but that "there are probably few experiences more profound than being understood."

[5]For example, by listening to myself I become aware of feeling frustrated, and I communicate my feeling to my partner: "I feel frustrated that we have not yet made a decision about our vacation plans." By listening to my partner's response to my communication, I become aware that she too is feeling frustrated. I acknowledge her feeling, and together we agree to set aside some time later in the day to try to reach a decision.

[6]Richard L. Johannesen, "The Emerging Concept of Communication as Dialogue," Quarterly Journal of Speech, LVII, 4,(December, 1971), pp. 373-382. For further understanding of the concept of dialog--in addition to Johannesen's bibliography--see John Stewart, Bridges Not Walls (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1977) 2d ed; Charles T. Brown and Paul W. Keller,

Monologue to Dialogue (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973), esp. Chapter 10; Chuck Gallagher, S.J., The Marriage Encounter (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975).

[7]Talking from self-awareness, self-disclosure, and talking from "homebase" are synonomous concepts I share with my students. I have coined the term, "homebase," to indicate oneself--the complete organism--and the totality of one's inner experience (to the extent that it is available to consciousness) considered as a source of self-awareness and as a springboard for dialogic communication. "Homebase" is analogous to the "Awareness Wheel" developed by Sherod Miller, Elam Nunnally, and Daniel Wackman, Alive and Aware (Minneapolis: Interpersonal Communication Programs, 1975), pp. 28-52. While homebase connotes the total complexity and range of one's inner experiences, the "Awareness Wheel" takes that complexity and organizes it into five manageable dimensions: (1) sensing, (2) thinking, (3) feeling, (4) wanting, and (5) doing.

[8]The skills of listening to oneself and listening to one's partner reinforce each other when used by both partners. When I listen to myself, if my partner is empathically present to me--listening to me with me--and searching with me in the process of self-exploration, then I can often discover more about myself with my partner's help. And the more I can understand about myself and my experience, the more I will be able to be with and listen empathically to my partner and understand his or her experience of life--and, in turn, facilitate my partner's self-exploration, self-discovery, and self-disclosure.

[9]John O. Stevens, Awareness: exploring, experimenting, experiencing (Lafayette, Ca.: Real People Press, 1971), pp. 88-89. In his section on "Communication Within," Stevens recommends the practice of "Listening to Yourself" and externalizing inner thoughts, feelings, and conflicts by talking outloud to an imaginary partner in a "fantasy dialogue" (pp. 64-66).

[10]Stevens, p. 88.

[11]Stevens, p. 88. Stevens' analysis is compatible with Thomas Aquinas' teaching that love is a response to the perceived "good" and that we cannot love what we do not know as "good." (See Introduction to Saint Thomas Aquinas, ed Anton C. Pegis (New York: Modern Library, 1948), pp. 364-367.) Thus, when someone openly reveals himself to us, we can know the "good" of the person and then respond with love.

I don't know if we can teach people to communicate openly, honestly, genuinely. Modeling is perhaps the best strategy for allowing people to appreciate the value of authenticity. We can present the concept and show its relationship to effective and satisfying interaction; and we can communicate authentically ourselves; but to be or not to be authentic is an existential choice which only the individual can make. The saying seems true: "Values are caught--not taught."

[12]Note that these three attitudes or conditions identified by Rogers--sometimes referred to as the "therapeutic triad"--are among the components of dialog presented in the earlier reference to Johannesen's article.

Dean C. Barnlund has developed a related set of principles for effecting the formation of a positive interpersonal relationship. According

to Barnlund, a "constructive communicative relationship" is likely to develop when the following conditions obtain: (1) "when there is willingness to become involved with the other person;" (2) "when one or both persons convey positive regard for the other;" (3) "when a permissive psychological climate develops" (with emphasis on understanding rather than judging the other); (4) "when there is the desire and the capacity to listen;" (5) "when empathic understanding is communicated;" (6) "when there is accurate reflection and clarification of feelings;" and (7) "when the communicators are genuine and congruent" (quoted by Barbour and Goldberg, pp. 38-39). Barnlund's principles reflect a strong Rogerian influence. They seem to be reducible to Roger's three fundamental attitudes.

It is not enough that individuals in relationship communicate, i.e., transmit, the Rogerian attitudes or apply Barnlund's principles. Rogers stresses that the person in relationship must perceive the attitudes and skills of the partner in order for there to be any facilitative effect. (See, e.g., Client-Centered Therapy, pp. 44; 50; 66.)

I'd like to state my opinion that any discussion of the "morality" of communication must be based on belief in the fundamental worth of the individual human being and the assumption that each person deserves, or has the right, to receive truth, respect, caring, and understanding in his or her communication with other. In behavioral terms, each person deserves to receive both verbal and nonverbal: (a) affirmation as a being of worth; (b) expressions of caring; (c) empathic responses; and (d) truthful self-disclosure and feedback from others. In light of these remarks, it seems to me that Rogers' attitudes and Barnlund's principles can be viewed as both moral and commendable.

I feel the strong need to say--somewhere in this very serious paper--that in intimate communication there's got to be a place for humor! Partners need to laugh together and enjoy the funny, incongrous situations of life. Laughter is one of the special pleasures of life, and a sense of humor is a quality that needs to be cultivated. I think humor is moral too! A couple who've been married fifty-two years told me recently that they always find something to talk about and laugh about. I suspect that this fact has something to do with the longevity of their marriage.

[13]See, e.g., the following works by Carl R. Rogers: Client-Centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications, and Theory (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1951), pp. 19-64; "The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change,: Journal of Consulting Psychology, 21, 1957, pp. 95-103; On Becoming a Person (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961); Freedom to Learn (Columbus, Ohio: Merrill, 1969); Carl Rogers on Encounter Groups (New York: Harper and Row, 1970); "Empathic: An Unappreciated Way of Being," Counseling Psychologist, 5, 2, 1975, pp. 2-10; Carl Rogers on Personal Power (New York: Delacorte, 1977).

[14]On Becoming a Person, p. 330.

[15]On Becoming a Person, p. 18.

[16]Becoming Partners, p. 202.

[17]Becoming Partners, pp. 203-204. Such open communication of feeling is an instance of authentic self-disclosure--the genuineness recommended by Rogers. Self-disclosure involves two things: prior self-awareness and

willingness to risk. Risking, in turn, requires courage. Rogers sees risk-taking as an important component of a healthy component of a healthy, growing relationship.

[18] On Becoming a Person, pp. 331-332. This early (1951) and relatively simple definition of empathy is only one of a long series of attempts by Rogers to communicate an understanding of empathy. Egan says that "all of Rogers' works...form a magnificent treatise on total listening" (Gerard Egan, Encounter: Group Processes for Interpersonal Growth (Belmont, Ca.: Wadsworth, 1970), p. 251). For a recent and highly sophisticated description of empathy, see Rogers, Counseling Psychologist, 5, 2, 1975, p. 4. In the Editor's Introduction (p. 2) of the foregoing article, John M. Whitely says of Rogers that "his early work on empathy and the other components of the therapeutic triad was the start of one of the major research thrusts of the past three decades."

Noting Rogers' emphasis on nonjudgmental responses, Barbour and Goldberg (p. 35) state that their research into the effects of evaluation "has tended, generally, to support the Rogerian position, but not in an extreme way." The authors present four principles of evaluation based on their research.

[19] On Becoming a Person, pp. 332-334. In my opinion, the active and on-going cultivation of empathy is necessary to counteract one's constant tendency to evaluate. This is not to say that one should never evaluate. Evaluation is a necessary human activity. But developing one's capacity for empathic understanding requires great effort, consistent self-discipline, and an abiding desire to understand others. The reward can be improved communication and greater mutual satisfaction in one's relationships.

[20] Counseling Psychologist, 5, 2, 1975, p. 2.

[21] On Becoming a Person, p. 17.

[22] On Becoming a Person, p. 18. Speaking of the "mysterious business of relating with other human beings," Rogers (Freedom to Learn, p. 222) explains that interpersonal communication is mysterious because it is "almost never achieved except in part. You probably never feel fully understood by another, and neither do I." He continues:

"Yet I find it extremely rewarding when I have been able, in a particular instance, truly to communicate myself to another. I find it very precious when, for some moment in time, I have felt really one with, fully in touch with, another person."

[23] Freedom to Learn, pp. 222-226.

[24] Becoming Partners, p. 204.

[25] Carl Rogers on Personal Power, p. 47. Rogers (pp. 34-41) indicates the value of conducting family meetings in a person-centered atmosphere in which feelings, complaints, satisfactions, suggestions, and feedback can be openly and safely shared--and empathically received--by all members of the family.

In the Rogers-Tillich Dialogue, both scholars agreed upon the importance of Tillich's concept of "listening love." Theologian Tillich

spoke of his concept of "agape" as a substitute for an abstract philosophy of values. He said:

"I replace this thing by my concept of agape, or love--namely love which is listening. I call it listening love, which doesn't follow abstract valuations, but which is related to the concrete situation, and out of its listening to this very moment gains its decision for action and its inner feeling of satisfaction and even joy--or dissatisfaction and bad conscience."

Rogers replied: "I like that phrase because I think it could be a listening within, a listening to oneself, as well as a listening love for the other individual." Tillich responded: "Yes, when I say listening to the situation, I mean the situation is constituted out of everything around me and myself; so listening love is always listening to both sides" ("Paul Tillich and Carl Rogers: A Dialogue," transcript of a videotaped conversation recorded at Radio/Television, San Diego State College, 1965, pp. 22-23).

[26]Carl R. Rogers, "A Humanistic Conception of Man," in Science and Human Affairs, ed. Richard E. Farson, (Palo Alto, Ca.: Science and Behavior Books, 1965), p. 20.

[27]Science and Human Affairs, pp. 25-26.

[28]Jack Seiquist, "An Evaluation of a Model Course in Dyadic Communication," Major Applied Research Project (dissertation), Nova University, 1979, p. 72. In addition, the literature search revealed nine references in which human relations training programs for teachers were developed and/or discussed. The review of literature supported (1) the societal and individual need for the development of dyadic skills; (2) the appropriateness of a special course in dialog and dyadic communication in the context of close relationships. Active empathic listening emerged as an important component of dyadic communication.

[29]Jack Seiquist, p. 72. (See especially Bernard J. Brommel, "A Critical Analysis of Communication Instruction in Current Family Interaction Improvement Programs, paper presented at the SCA Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, November, 1978; and Kathleen M. Galvin, "A Critical Analysis of Communication Instruction in Current Marital Interaction Programs," paper presented at the SCA Annual Meeting, Minneaoplis, November, 1978.) In addition, my research showed that students in the Achieving Dialog course, when compared to a control group, attained significantly higher increases in dyadic communication competence, as measured by the Interpersonal Communication Inventory.

[30]For example, when discussing the specific "technique of dialogue" practiced by participants and graduates of the international Marriage Encounter movement, Gallagher emphasizes the importance of the marriage relationship:

"Were Marriage Encounter to stop with self-discovery, we would miss the point. Even writing love letters and stopping there would fall short. The whole process involved in dialogue is awareness of relationship. Everything in the Marriage Encounter--the presentations by the teams, the writing, the reading and the listening is to lead up to the couple's moments together" (Chuck Gallagher, S.J., The Marriage Encounter (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1975), p. 109).

Rogers speaks of the relationship as something real--a process.

In his discussion of "one of the threads of permanence and enrichment in any lasting relationship," he describes his perception of the commitment made by partners as follows: "We each commit ourselves to working together on the changing process of our relationship" (Becoming Partners, p. 201). Each is individually committed, but the partners work together on the relationship. Rogers sees the relationship "as a flowing stream, not a static structure which can be taken for granted." The partners' commitment focuses on "the immediate relationship of loving and living which exists between the two" (p. 202).

[31]Alvin Toffler, Future Shock (New York: Bantam, 1970), p. 416.

[32]K. Patricia Cross, Accent on Learning (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1976), p. 19.

[33]Cross, p. 20. Cross states that most research shows that college students increase their interpersonal skills during their college years; but she says that "their education in this area is more by accident than design. It appears to be the result of group living and close acquaintance with a variety of people" rather than the consequence of planned instruction. Patrick C. Kennicott and Bernard O'Donnell of ERIC/RCS say that:

"Speech communication educators now recognize that instruction in interpersonal communication must assume a position of primacy in the communication curriculum at all educational levels. And a communication-conscious society is demanding that educators help students acquire that full range of communication skill necessary to achieve meaningful social adjustment and economic mobility" (Barbour and Goldberg, pp. vii-viii).

[34]Eleanor Macklin, "Some Thoughts on College Students' Sexual Patterns," in Mind Styles/Life Styles, ed. Nathaniel Lande (Los Angeles: Price/Stern/Sloan, 1976), pp. 231-232.

[35]It is my opinion that, if students are to attain an appropriate level of dyadic competence, they need to have available in the speech communication curriculum a minimum of two complementary courses in dyadic communication. Skill acquisition and development take time!

I believe that students are aware of their communication needs. In a 1976 cross-sectional survey (N=302), three out of four West Valley College students stated that they were interested in learning how to communicate (talk/listen) more effectively in both one-to-one and in small group situations. (See Jack Seiquist, "Determining Students' Needs for Oral Communication Skills at West Valley College," Practicum, Nova University, 1977.)

My position is that the speech communication curriculum needs to be expanded at the community college/lower division level to incorporate two complementary courses in dyadic communication. In my dissertation, I develop the foregoing points in terms of the currently popular Interpersonal Communication course and West Valley College's Achieving Dialog course. (See Jack Seiquist, "An Evaluation of a Model Course in Dyadic Communication," Major Applied Research Project, Nova University, 1979, pp. 35-52. [redacted]. I can provide microfiche copies of the dissertation at cost--$1.50, including postage--through Nova University's microfiche bank.)